



Written by [Steven J. DuBord](#) on December 9, 2009

## President Obama to Accept Nobel Peace Prize

President Barack Obama is set to accept the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize on December 10 in Oslo, Norway. This will be less than two weeks after his announcement that he is sending 30,000 more U.S. troops to Afghanistan, not exactly what one would expect from a "peace prize" winner.

The Nobel Committee cited Obama's "extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples," but the ongoing war in Iraq and deepening U.S. involvement in Afghanistan will lend a touch of irony to the acceptance ceremony.



The White House said Obama would acknowledge his role as a war president, and he would mention his decision to commit more U.S. forces to Afghanistan. "We'll address directly the notion, I think, that many have wondered, which is the juxtaposition of the timing for the Nobel Peace Prize and his commitment to add more troops into Afghanistan," said White House spokesman Robert Gibbs. "That's obviously something that he will address."

Questions of Obama's fitness for such an award were voiced as soon as the Nobel Committee made its decision known. Matters were exacerbated by the fact that someone would have had to nominate Obama a mere 11 days into his presidency since the nomination deadline was February 1.

Obama and the White House have painted the award as being more about America's leadership role on the world stage than about the President's personal accomplishments. "To be honest, I do not feel that I deserve to be in the company of so many of the transformative figures who've been honored by this prize," Obama declared in remarks he made on October 9. "I do not view it as a recognition of my own accomplishments, but rather as an affirmation of American leadership on behalf of aspirations held by people in all nations."

This same humble tone is likely to be echoed in Oslo during Obama's acceptance speech. Even if the prize is more about future potential than past deeds, this still places a heavy burden on Obama to deliver results that promote peace or risk appearing even more unfit for the honor.

Only two prior U.S. Presidents have been declared worthy of a Nobel Peace Prize while still in office — Theodore Roosevelt in 1906 and Woodrow Wilson in 1919. Obama is the only one to win in his first year in office.

Danielle Pletka, vice president of foreign and defense policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute, said that Obama should evidence humility during his acceptance since he has no real accomplishments to point to. "I think the best thing he can do is to take the prize and accept it in the name of those who the Nobel committee apparently didn't want to consider and who really are deserving," Pletka stated. She pointed to the Iranian people and to Rebiya Kadeer, president of the World Uighur Congress, as potential recipients who had done more for world peace.



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Republican strategist Kevin Madden called the fact that Obama is presiding over two wars "the elephant in the room. They're going to have to acknowledge it." Appearing on *ABC News Now's Top Line*, Madden said: "What you're going to see is the White House project an image that says, 'this isn't about me, and this is about the people who actually have done something. This is a shared reward, a shared responsibility.' And sort of deflect away from his most recent actions, which was to essentially increase troop movement in Afghanistan."

Obama has said he will donate the prize money to charity, but the specific recipients have not yet been chosen. This attempt to appear as if he is not gaining anything personally from the prize does nothing to negate the actual unconstitutionality of a sitting President accepting a Nobel Peace Prize.

The Norwegian parliament handpicks the Nobel Committee, and the committee members retain their affiliation to the political parties from which they were chosen. This boils down to Norway's government essentially awarding the Nobel Peace Prize and the accompanying prize money just as it would be said that any U.S. Congressional committee would be acting on behalf of the U.S. government.

Article I, Section 9 of the U.S. Constitution clearly states: "No person holding any office of profit or trust under them, shall, without the consent of the Congress, accept of any present, emolument, office, or title, of any kind whatever, from any king, prince or foreign state."

Obama needs to either seek the consent of Congress to accept the Peace Prize or completely decline the award. His current course of action, no matter how humble it appears, is blatantly unconstitutional.



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